

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF MUSIC**

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July 8, 1998

Dean Karen L. Wolff  
Conservatory of Music  
Oberlin College  
77 West College Street  
Oberlin, OH 44074-1588

Dear Dean Wolff:

The NASM Commission on Accreditation at its June meetings gave careful consideration to the application for renewal of Membership submitted by Oberlin College.

The Commission voted to continue the current Membership status of the institution and to seek further information before completing its work with the application. This deferral by the Commission is not a negative action. Rather, it enables consideration of issues and concerns by the institution and the Commission within the framework of the present Self-Study and on-site visit.

The institution is asked to respond to the following concerns:

1. It is not clear how the NASM standard that students be made familiar with the capabilities of technology is being met for all students enrolled in the degrees, Bachelor of Music in Performance and Bachelor of Music in Music History (see Self-Study, page 64; *NASM Handbook 1997-98*, page 79, item VII.E.). A separate advisory regarding this standard is enclosed.
2. It is not clear how the NASM standard requiring knowledge of fretted instruments and the voice is being met for students enrolled in the degree, Bachelor of Music in Music Education, Instrumental Emphasis (see *NASM Handbook 1997-98*, page 90, item VIII.J.3.b.[3]). The Oberlin Course Catalog 1997-98, page 388, Course 301, implies that the development of knowledge of fretted instruments is for voice-emphasis majors only.
3. The description of Course 101 in the Oberlin Course Catalog 1997-98 (page 390), which cites only "the history of Western music," should confirm the inclusion of a wider range of musics, including jazz, world music, and electronic and computer music, as indicated on page 63 of the Self-Study, because of the importance of this course to meeting the NASM standard regarding music of diverse cultural sources (see *NASM Handbook 1997-98*, page 79, item VII.D.1.).

The response should be submitted by October 1 for consideration at the Commission meetings of November, 1998.

A copy of the NASM Visitors' Report is enclosed, along with a document outlining the procedures for submitting the response.

Dean Karen L. Wolff  
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The Commission notes that the degree, Bachelor of Music in Music Theory, exists as a second major only. The Commission believes that it should be listed in the NASM *Directory* because the program appears to be a substantive curricular option pursued by students (see Self-Study, pages 91-93; Oberlin Course Catalog 1997-98, pages 296, 320-321; NASM Visitors' Report, cover sheet). The NASM *Directory* listing for this program will be as follows:

Bachelor of Music in Music Theory (as part of a double major only)

The Commission voted to grant Final Approval for Listing for the following programs:

Performance Diploma (Undergraduate).  
Bachelor of Music in Technology in Music and Related Arts.  
Master of Music in Historical Performance.

It is noted that the degree, Bachelor of Music in Technology in Music and Related Arts, was previously titled and listed with Plan Approval as Bachelor of Music in Electronic and Computer Music, and that the degree, Master of Music in Historical Performance, was previously titled and listed with Plan Approval as Master of Music in Performance.

The Commission commends the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music for its distinguished faculty, for its standards of excellence for students, and for the high quality of its library.

Please contact the NASM National Office staff if you need clarification, information, or assistance in responding to issues raised by the Commission.

With best wishes and cordial regards, I remain

Sincerely yours,



Samuel Hope  
Executive Director

SH:ws  
Enclosure

cc: Nancy S. Dye, President  
Oberlin College  
William Hipp, President, NASM  
Joyce Bolden, Chair  
NASM Commission on Accreditation  
Daniel Sher, Associate Chair  
NASM Commission on Accreditation  
Frederick Miller, NASM Visitor  
Anne Dhu McLucas, NASM Visitor

# UBERLIN

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August 28, 1998

Mr. Samuel Hope  
Executive Director  
National Association of Schools of Music  
11250 Roger Bacon Dr., Suite 21  
Reston, VA 22090

Dear Sam:

I write in response to your letter of July 8 informing me of the deferral by the Commission of Oberlin's renewal of membership. Following are the Commission's three concerns and our responses to them.

**1. It is not clear how the NASM standard that students be made familiar with the capabilities of technology is being met for all students enrolled in the degrees, Bachelor Music in Performance and Bachelor of Music in Music History (S.S. page 64. Handbook, p. 79, item VII.E).**

Oberlin provides substantial opportunities for engagement with technology to all music students. Provision has been made for all Bachelor of Music students to gain familiarity with music technology through required coursework in Music Theory, Music History, and Class Piano as follows:

Students are introduced to the topic of Music and Technology in the course **Introduction to the History and Literature of Music** (MHST 101). (Please see course description below). Students also use CD-Rom technology and are introduced to Internet resources in this course.

Ear training software is available in the Conservatory's computer laboratory for use by students taking **Aural Skills** (MUTH 101-2). These include LISTEN, an ear-training program and an audio tape "Relative Pitch Ear-Training Program." In addition some aural skills assignments are posted with sound files on the web.

The capabilities of the DiscKlavier are explored in **Piano Class** (APST 110-111).

Performance teaching studios contain audio equipment for recording lessons. Many also have video equipment. In all cases, video equipment is readily available for use in teaching studios.

In addition, some of the specific performance divisions require technologically oriented work. Vocal performance students are required to take the course **The Teaching of Singing** (APST 230) which makes extensive use of the Otto B. Schoepfle Vocal Arts Laboratory. This facility is equipped with a sonograph which produces real-time spectrograms of such things as pitch, overtones, vibrato, legato, and amplitude of sound; a computer which allows examination of formants and plots accuracy of sung vowels; a

nasometer; an aerophone; and an electroglottograph which charts openings and closing of the vocal folds. Students are able to compare visualizations of their own sounds with those of artist/performers.

Trumpet students make use of a computerized audition excerpt program.

Oberlin's first Internet concert was organized and produced by students in the tuba studio and plans are being made for continuance of events of this nature.

Organ students, beginning in Fall 1998, will be required to make use of a faculty-created web site as a part of the course Organ Literature, History, and Design (MLIT 213 & 214).

Students who assist the keyboard technician staff learn to use a computerized piano tuning system.

As part of the study of double-reed instruments, students must make use of the reed-making labs (oboe and bassoon) which contain equipment enabling students to make and adjust their own reeds.

A number of elective courses in the Technology in Music and the Related Arts (TIMARA) are available to performance majors. These include:

Introduction to Music Technology I & II (Tech 100 & 101)  
Computer Music and Advanced Computer Music (TECH 201 & 210)  
Performance Technology (TECH 211)  
Workshop in Music and Media Technologies (TECH 350)

During the past five or six years, the Conservatory has experienced approximately a 30% increase in the use of technology (excluding sound reinforcement) for concerts and recitals. This statistic indicates a considerable relationship with technology by students in various large and chamber ensembles.

\* \* \*

In addition to the experiences described above in the course **Introduction to the History and Literature of Music** (MHST 101), students enrolled in the Bachelor of Music in Music History are made familiar with the capabilities of technology through the course **Introduction to Music Research and Writing** (MHST 301) which includes a three-day unit on electronic resources. The types of resources explored include:

The World Wide Web--includes a discussion of search engines and critical assessment skills needed to utilize the WWW. Specific sites such as "Rome Reborn: The Vatican Library and Renaissance Culture Library of Congress Vatican Exhibit" are examined in detail.

Also introduced are FirstSearch (some 40 databases available via OBIS); the Oxford English Dictionary (WWW version); RISM site; Arts and Humanities Citation Index (Electronic version); and scholarly e-mail lists.

Music History students are also required to take **Music in the 20th Century** (MHST 275) during which they spend time in the electronic music lab familiarizing themselves with both the hardware and software used by 20th century composers.

2. It is not clear how the NASM standard requiring knowledge of fretted instruments and the voice is being met for students enrolled in the degree, Bachelor of Music in Music Education, Instrumental Emphasis (see *NASM Handbook*, p. 90, item VIII.J.3.b.[3]). The Oberlin Course Catalog 1997-98, p. 388, Course 301, implies that the development of knowledge of fretted instruments is for voice-emphasis majors only.

Since the Fall semester of 1997, competency on fretted instruments has been required of all students in both tracks of the Bachelor of Music in Music Education degree program. This competency is developed in the course Teaching Music to Adolescents (MUED 300). Please see the course description in the 1998-99 Oberlin Course Catalog, p. 402.

Provision for acquisition of knowledge of the voice occurs in two courses required of instrumental-track students in the Bachelor of Music in Music Education degree program. Attention to the child's singing voice is included in the syllabus for Teaching Music to Children (MUED 301). A unit of study dealing with the teenage and young adult voice is included in the course Teaching Music to Adolescents (MUED 300). In addition, instrumental-track students must demonstrate vocal competency by performing a vocal solo as a part of the Comprehensive Musicianship Exam required of all music education students.

3. The description of Course 101 in the Oberlin Course Catalog 1997-98 (p. 390), which cites only "the history of Western music," should confirm the inclusion of a wider range of musics, including jazz, world music, and electronic and computer music, as indicated on page 63 of the Self-Study, because of the importance of this course to meeting the NASM standard regarding music of diverse cultural sources (see *NASM Handbook* 1997-98, p. 79, item VII.D.1.).

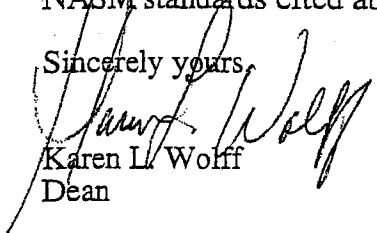
As reported in the Self Study, the course has, for several years, included a wide range of music including jazz, world music, electronic and computer music, all of which is reflected in the syllabus. The course description for **Introduction to the History and Literature of Music** (MHST 101) has been revised and will appear as follows in the next publication of the Oberlin Course Catalog:

#### 101. Introduction to the History and Literature of Music

A survey of major developments in the history of Western music including jazz, vernacular music, electronic and computer music, and an introduction to ethnomusicology. Selected major musical works will be considered from a variety of historical standpoints. The course serves as a prerequisite to the MHST 226, 235, 245, 255, 275 courses. *Prerequisites:* knowledge of musical notation. *Enrollment Limit:* 100. Conservatory students are encouraged to register for this course in their freshman year.

I hope this information will clarify the Oberlin Conservatory's compliance with the NASM standards cited above.

Sincerely yours,

  
Karen L. Wolff  
Dean

cc: Nancy S. Dye, President